Separation of medical education and research

663. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the aims and objectives of the proposed separate departments of medical research and education;

(b) what are the reasons for creating a separate medical research department when there is Indian Council of Medical Research which is already looking after medical research;

(c) whether the proposed department is on the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Prime Minister;

(d) whether the proposed department is on the lines of Department of Scientific and Industrial Research; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) The aims and objectives are to deal and encourage fundamental - the 'blue Sky' research for generation and advancement of knowledge; strategic research - aimed at development of better or new tools (diagnostics, drugs, vaccines, devices etc.); clinical research - testing the new tools developed; and operational research - assessing the efficiency of the tools under field/programme condition; encourage harnessing of new knowledge of gene and gene functions, expand capacity for structural biology in the health sector, particularly making the health sector utilize fruits of the research; promote clinical research and speedy translation of research results into products.

(b) Given the complexities of current and future health challenges and opportunities provided by modern biology, no single agency is likely to address these effectively. There is an urgent need for a new Department to steer and coordinate health research activities in the country. To convert the above vision into concrete action, an exclusive Department headed by a Secretary is required only to deal with health research and ICMR will continue to be a Society under the proposed department

(c) The topic was examined by the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Prime Minister and recommended for implementation.

(d) and (e) The proposed Department would be an independent new Department within the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It would facilitate the proper coordination between other scientific departments and provide the necessary impetus to medical research. The ICMR would function as an autonomous organization in the proposed Department for Health Research. Like in the two Councils (CSIR and ICAR), the DG, ICMR will also be the Secretary of the proposed Department.